

LUTTERWORTH HIGH SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Reviewed: By Full Governing Body

Adopted: By the Governing Body – 6th October 2020

Signed: Chair of Governors:

Date: 6th October 2020

Signed: Head Teacher: Julian Kirby

Date: 6th October 2020

To be Reviewed: October 2021

LUTTERWORTH HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Within this Attendance Policy a parent is defined as in Section 576, Education Act 1996. This means all natural parents, whether married or not and includes any person who, although not a biological parent, has responsibility or has care of the child or young person.

Introduction:

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. This school attendance policy is written to reflect the law and also the guidance produced by the Department of Education.

It is very important therefore that you make sure your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

COVID 19 Addendum

Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) for the school year 2020 to 2021, a new category has been added to record instances when a pupil is 'not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)'. Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) (This code is not counted as an absence in the school census) This code is used to record sessions where the pupil's travel to or presence at school would conflict with:

- guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England or the Department of Health and Social Care¹² or
- any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

In the event of absence due to COVID-19 every student will have immediate access to remote learning. The work can be found on Google Classroom and Show My Homework.

Why regular attendance is so important:

Any absence (including lateness) affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in a Penalty Notice (for each parent) and/or prosecution.

Promoting regular attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, students and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you information on attendance
- Provide you with reports three times a year on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance is, and how this relates to their attainment
- Celebrate good attendance each half-term

Understanding absence:

By law, every half-day absence from school has to be coded by the school (not by the parent), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the reason for any absence is always required. *These codes are given in Appendix 1.*

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a genuine reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other exceptional circumstances. Approved education activities are coded as a present mark.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. These include:

- parents keeping children off school unnecessarily (i.e. condoned absence)
- truancy during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children, birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term-time

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance should be addressed by the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend school, you should not cover up their absence, or, give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and this usually makes things worse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when their attendance falls below 85% for whatever reason. We monitor all student absence and PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where necessary.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence and then on each day that your child is absent
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation for the absence and you must do this even if you have already telephoned us

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence (*and on subsequent days*) if we have not heard from you
- Write to you if we are concerned about your child's attendance to alert you to any emerging patterns or level of absence
- Invite you in to discuss the situation if absences persist
- Refer the matter to the Attendance Manager if attendance is a concern

To address issues with student attendance we may:

- Request medical evidence for regular and/or prolonged absence
- Arrange for a visit to your home to be undertaken to establish that your child is safe. This could be by a Police Officer
- Liaise with the other agencies and Traveller Education Service
- Take all reasonable steps to address the identified attendance issues

Copies of all correspondence regarding your child's attendance are stored in your child's file.

Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about a variety of matters, including absence, so we need to have all of your contact numbers for all times of the day. Please help us to help you and your child by making sure that these are kept up to date. School must be provided with at least two phone numbers for your child. This is a safeguarding requirement.

Student Services Court Team - Leicestershire County Council:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may refer the matter to the Court Officer for the Student Services Court Team in the Local Authority for further action. Court Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates' Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority. (Please note that Penalty Notices can be issued by the Local Authority immediately following a period of leave that has not been authorised by the school.)

See Leicestershire County Council Website for more details www.leics.gov.uk

Lateness:

Persistent lateness is a serious concern and may affect your child's educational progress.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at 8.40am and your child is to be in class at that time.

Morning registration is at 8.40am and the afternoon registration is at 11.40am.

At **9.30am** and **12.00pm** the registers are closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site (**U code** see *Appendix 1*), but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of further action from the Local Authority if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the school to resolve the problem. You can approach the school at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time. Detentions will also be issued for everytime your child is late to school with no good reason provided by the parent.

Leave of absence in term-time:

Taking leave of absence in term-time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help their child by not taking holidays in school time. Headteachers are no longer able to authorise any term-time absence unless there are exceptional circumstances.

All applications for leave must be made in advance and in making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually and you will be notified of the decision in writing.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be coded as unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued to parents. The school can request a Penalty Notice be issued from the Student Services Court Team at Leicestershire County Council. A Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child, to be paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the fine(s) within this timescale would mean the fine rising to £120 to be paid within 28 days of the original fine being issued. If the fine(s) remain unpaid after the full period of 28 days has expired, parents may face legal action under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

School targets:

The Attendance target for the school for 2020/21 is 96%.

The registration system:

The school will use a computerised system for keeping school attendance records. The national codes (*Appendix 1*) are used to record attendance information.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are given in *Appendix 2*.

Date of review: November 2021

(date)

Appendix 1

| CODE | DESCRIPTION | MEANING |
|-------------|--|-----------------------------|
| / | Present (AM) | Present |
| \ | Present (PM) | Present |
| B | Educated off site (NOT Dual registration) | Approved Education Activity |
| C | Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) | Authorised absence |
| D | Dual registration (i.e. student attending other establishment) | Approved Education Activity |
| E | Excluded (no alternative provision made) | Authorised absence |
| G | Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement) | Unauthorised absence |
| H | Family holiday (agreed) | Authorised absence |
| I | Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments) | Authorised absence |
| J | Interview | Approved Education Activity |
| L | Late (before registers closed) | Present |
| M | Medical/Dental appointments | Authorised absence |
| N | No reason yet provided for absence | Unauthorised absence |
| O | Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description) | Unauthorised absence |
| P | Approved sporting activity | Approved Education Activity |
| R | Religious observance | Authorised absence |
| S | Study leave | Authorised absence |
| T | Traveller absence | Authorised absence |
| U | Late (after registers closed) | Unauthorised absence |

| | | |
|----------|---|-------------------------------------|
| V | Educational visit or trip | Approved Education Activity |
| W | Work experience | Approved Education Activity |
| X | Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age (COVID19 Related Absence) | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Y | Enforced closure | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Z | Student not yet on roll | Not counted in possible attendances |
| # | school closed to students | Not counted in possible attendances |

Appendix 2

Mrs Amy Hunter, Deputy Headteacher

Mrs Marion Bullivant, Student Support and Attendance Manager

Mrs Karen Farnsworth, Attendance Officer